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S E C R E T PARIS 008186

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/01/2015

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [FR](#) [LE](#)

SUBJECT: FRENCH CONTINUE TO BAN AL-MANAR, ALTHOUGH APPEAL  
PENDING

REF: A. STATE 216186

[1](#)B. STATE 216191

[1](#)C. PARIS 6933

Classified By: POLITICAL MINISTER COUNSELOR JOSIAH ROSENBLATT, FOR REAS  
ONS 1.4 B/D

[1](#)1. (S) We discussed reftel points on preventing Al Manar broadcasts with CSA (France's FCC-equivalent) and MFA contacts on December 2. We stressed the importance of France continuing its ban on Al Manar.

[1](#)2. (S) Isabel Mariani, international affairs liaison at the CSA, confirmed that, as reported in ref C, the Conseil d'Etat (France's highest administrative court) had not yet made a decision on Al Manar's appeal of the CSA's December 2004 decision to ban it from French airwaves. Mariani said CSA was eagerly awaiting the Conseil d'Etat's decision, and expected it "before Christmas."

[1](#)3. (S) In a separate December 2 discussion with poloff, MFA Lebanon desk officer Remy Bouallegue expressed general agreement with reftel points and stressed that the CSA ban on Al Manar reflected the GoF's ongoing battle against discrimination and anti-Semitism. He added that Hizballah's hardening position and recent suburban unrest in France, in his view, made it highly unlikely that the Conseil d'Etat would reverse the CSA ban, though the court remained independent. Bouallegue added that the GoF supported "europeanizing" the Al Manar ban. This remained an issue still to be resolved in Brussels, complicated, said Bouallegue, by complex EU audio-visual regulations. In the GoF's view, the Al Manar ban was a question of public order, and it should not be left to individual European governments to take action against the station and its satellite carriers. Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>

Stapleton